

*The EJC will host its annual International Holocaust Remembrance Day commemoration on 26 January 2022, in partnership with the French Presidency of the Council of the European Union and the Representative Council of French Jewish Institutions (CRIF)*

95 years ago on the 27th January, Cipora Feivlovich was born in a village in modern day Romania. She lived a happy childhood but everything changed, when along with her classmates, she was forced out of school at the age of 14. Her crime: Being Jewish.

The following years would be marked by fear, with the introduction of further legislation persecuting the Jewish community. Cipora and her family retreated into hiding. Then fear was matched by harrowing brutality when they were sent to Auschwitz in 1944.

Cipora would be one of the very few survivors, while her family was among the millions that were ruthlessly murdered behind retched iron gates.

It has been 77 years, since the liberation of the Auschwitz-Birkenau concentration camp, and remembrance of the horrors of the Holocaust is still today all so important.

Despite decades of effort, we have not yet done enough to combat discrimination. To fight anti-semitism.

Fear still exists, because anti-semitism still exists, and because the fundamental right to be free from discrimination irrespective of gender, race, ethnic origin or

sexual orientation is threatened daily. Too often we hear of attacks or plots to attack Synagogues. Too many live in fear.

In recent years, we have seen an escalation of anti-semitic conspiracy myths, disinformation and violence against communities move seamlessly between the online and offline world.

Fear is present because the threat remains.

And this is our collective failure.

We must do more to make every citizen in Europe feel safe. Everyone must be free to believe whatever they want to believe; and to be whoever they want to be. This is the essence of our Europe.

Our generation has a sacred responsibility: to teach the lessons of history and to remind our youth of how low humanity was allowed to sink. The moment we stop talking about the Holocaust is the moment we allow the remembrance of such horrors to fade away.

‘Don’t stop talking about the Holocaust, because if we don’t speak about it there will be enough Holocaust deniers after us’. That is Cipora’s message to us. The 27th of January marks an obligation for all of us to remember.

This is our collective responsibility.

Simone Veil - Auschwitz inmate 78651 - became the first President of a directly elected European Parliament. The European Parliament's responsibility to remember is institutional but is also very personal.

Today, we remember the atrocities committed towards the Jewish people and all the victims of the Holocaust; and we commemorate the liberation of the Auschwitz concentration camp. A liberation that signalled that there was still hope.

The European Parliament will not fail to condemn resurging anti-Semitism. The European Parliament we will continue to uphold our European values and fundamental Human Rights, to bring an end to discrimination.

This is our collective challenge.

We will never forget.

We will keep fighting.

This is the European Parliament's pledge to you.